

entry of the name and date of letter would be quite sufficient. It is a rule of the office on the part of the Public Trustee that all complaints shall be brought under his notice. It may be, however, that some of these affect himself or the office as a whole. It is, in our opinion, desirable that these complaints and grievances should come under the notice of the Board. It is not suggested that a reply to them or their removal should await or be dependent on the Board's decision, but the Board would be able to see from time to time whether and how they had been dealt with or disposed of.

Improper Advertising.

Charges have been made on this head. Some of the forms of advertisement are misleading, such as "Capital and Interest guaranteed by the State." This is only correct with qualifications. There is no such guarantee unless the money is in the Common Fund. There is no guarantee of an estate before it is realized. That the advertisement may mislead is evidenced by the terms of one of the complaints brought before us, in which it was suggested that the State guarantee applied, in a case of failure, to collect certain arrears of rent.

Local Bodies' Sinking Funds.

In respect of numerous local-body loans, sinking funds have been established as a basis of the loan. The Public Trustee is the recipient of many of these funds, but he only takes them as he receives them. He is under no obligation to see that the contributions thereto are paid, and does not attempt to compulsorily collect them. There ought really to be some covenant entered into by the borrowing body with the Public Trustee, enabling him to sue and recover, or else statutory provision should be made enabling and directing him to recover payments in arrear.

Secrecy.

We recommend that all who are taken on the staff should, on joining, sign a declaration of secrecy, as is the practice with banks. To place all on the same footing, we recommend that existing members of the staff should sign a similar declaration; also that all agents should do so. Agents are not members of the Public Service. A framed print of the declaration should be hung up conspicuously in the Head and Branch Offices.

Advisory Trustees.

The imputation is made that the Public Trust Office cannot always do as well as private trustees with regard to such matters as the carrying-on of a business or the management and realization of estates, and that it is not so well able as private trustees to gauge what should be done with regard to the maintenance and education of children in a particular case. This is a charge that may be made against trust companies also. It cannot be expected that any public trust department or office will in all cases possess the same special skill or the same knowledge of the testator's family as those whom the testator may have deliberately chosen because of those advantages. In the case of a public trust company a testator frequently associates a private individual with it as a joint trustee. This is not permissible in the case of the Public Trustee, and for the obviously good reason that, while the State may guarantee against the misfeasance of its own officers, it cannot undertake those of a private person also. This objection does not affect the recommendation we make that the Act should expressly authorize the appointment of one or more persons as advisory trustees, whom the Public Trustee may consult on all questions affecting the administration of the trust. The estate, of course, would be vested in the Public Trustee alone, and he would have sole custody and possession of the money and other property belonging to the estate, and do all the work connected with the administration, exactly as would be the case if no advisory trustee were appointed. It should be distinctly provided that no sale or dis-